

November 2003

FRIENDS OF LOUISIANA

NEWSLETTER



WILDLIFE REFUGES, INC.

# THE PELICAN SCOOP

The Friends of Louisiana Wildlife Refuges, Inc.

61389 Hwy 434 Lacombe, LA 70445

[www.flwr.org](http://www.flwr.org)

## BoardTalk

Please note that Judy Reis has resigned from the Board of Directors, and Jerry Sweeney has resigned as Treasurer but will remain on the Board. Steve Madere has joined the Board and will be the new Treasurer. Welcome Steve and thanks to all for their service.



At the end of 2003, our FLWR mailing address will no longer be the Post Office Box (P.O. Box 890). The new address will be 61389 Hwy. 434 (as above).

A new Friends logo (see above) designed by James Harris of USFWS has been accepted by the Board. The new logo will be on shirts, stationery, etc.

## Calendar of Events

### BOARD MEETINGS:

Thursday, December 4, 2003

Thursday, January 8, 2004

Thursday, February 5, 2004

All members of the Friends Group are invited to attend the Board's monthly meeting. They are held at the Slidell Cultural Center at 444 Erlanger Street in Old Towne Slidell at 6:00 P.M.

Stay up to date on Friends issues by logging on to our website. It is constantly being updated with new and pictures of interest. Log on at [www.flwr.org](http://www.flwr.org).

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

In preparation for Wild Things 2003, President Michele Hubert asked for volunteers to help spruce up the grounds at the entrance and at the Visitor's Center on Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Responding to her call were **Steve Madere**, **Glen Ruiz** and Holy Cross student volunteer, **Greg Guillot**. They came early and stayed late. The grass was cut, weeds were pulled, hedges trimmed and the butterfly gardens in the front and the back of the Visitors' Center were pruned and tilled. Of course, more needs to be done because it is an ongoing project. If anyone would like to help, you are always welcome to come by and "just start gardening". Thanks again to the volunteers.



We Want YOU!!



To Volunteer!  
**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED!!**

Call Michele Hubert (985 641-1237) or  
Lynne Cuccia (504 254-4256) for more  
information

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

This spring there will be two educational programs at Bayou Sauvage provided by grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

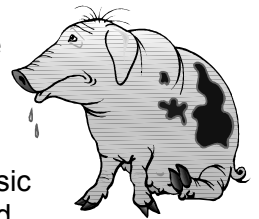
The first will provide funding for bus transportation for school children to and from the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge for an educational experience and a tour of the swamp. There will be 10 to 15 learning sessions from 9:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

The second is a Nature Learning grant that will provide funding for educational programs for 5th graders at 2 schools in the area. They too will visit the refuges for further study. There are a total of 4 programs and these will also be conducted in Spring, 2004.

Each of these projects will require assistance from volunteers. Some training will be provided by USFWS staff. If you are interested with assisting either or both programs, please contact Byron Fortier at USFWS (985 882 2025)

### *2003 Cochon d'Lait*

If you had happened to have not attended this year's Cochon d'lait, I suggest you put it on your "must do" calendar for next year. The mild, summer like evening on the grounds of the beautiful Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge just added to the pleasure of our gathering. Once again, our "pig roast" was sponsored by **Tower Engineering, Inc.** The food (which was exceptional) was catered by **BonFouca Restaurant and Caterers.** **Baskin-Robbins** supplied ice cream treats and **Abita Beer** donated the root beer. The music was by **Joe Holzhalt** of **Jo-Jo's Karaoke.** This proved to be most entertaining and enjoyed by kids and adults alike.



After dining, some dancing and a lot of singing, USFWS staff recognized the volunteers that devote time and energy to our wildlife projects throughout the year. **Joe Madere** was awarded his 5,000 hrs. of service pin.

Along with Joe, it was noted that two other senior volunteers, **L.J. Guillot** and **George Barry**, lend their untiring support to the refuges on a constant basis.

Our Friends group held a Silent Auction for several trips and framed art pieces and a raffle for additional items. And more than a dozen door prizes were awarded to guests with the winning tickets.

A big "thank you" to interns **Lisa** and **Jeremy** for helping set tables, chairs and whatever we asked them to do. This sure made our job easier.

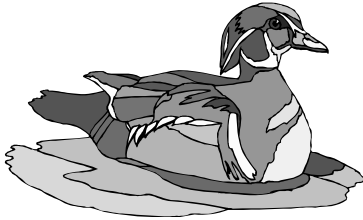


# WILD THINGS 2003



Without a doubt, **Wild Things 2003** was our best ever wildlife presentation. Being able to return to our original site to stage our event was a tremendous asset. We had more room available for our exhibitors, activities and presentations. With the completion of the renovation of the main office complex, USFWS was able to utilize this facility for tours, educational displays and exhibits. The Osprey Room hosted presentations on Nature Photography by **Joe Madere**; Wildlife Care and Rescue; Black Bear Conservation; Pelican Recovery in Louisiana; and What To Do with Injured Wildlife. The Ibis Room had seminars concerning bats; the endangered RCW in Big Branch Marsh NWR; coastal erosion; the American alligator; and a comprehensive look at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. All were informative, educational and well received.

As in past years, the canoe tours and pontoon tours were available and always full. The kids, naturally, enjoyed the Jr. Firefighters course. They had to don the gear, position hoses and tools and move quickly to the fire. This experience is always a hit! And speaking of a hit, **Dr. Magic** continually circulated around the grounds entertaining everyone. **Don Abney**, with Hug-A-Tree, gave a lively presentation on what kids should do if lost in the woods and **Mimi Clifton** demonstrated kayaking techniques. Visitors could also take a guided tour with **George Barry** and explore the flora and history of the Bayou Lacombe Centre site. There was a duck decoy making activity for children. The decoys were so charming that some of us 'older children' wanted to join in too!!



The music on the grounds was supplied by **Randy Hebert**, followed by **Northshore Country Song and Dance Society** and, a special treat (as they always are), **Sunpie and the Louisiana Sunspots** closed our event.

Our FLWR volunteers sold merchandise from the bookstore, T-shirts, food and drink. We also sold raffle tickets for almost two dozen fantastic prizes - including a pirogue that you could watch being made during the day. Most of the food and drink sold and many of the raffle prizes were donated by a variety of generous sponsors.

We also want to give a huge "thank you" to our Friends volunteers. Their untiring efforts throughout the entire day made Wild Things the success it was. Thank you **Gwen Traina, Carol and Tony Serio, Glen and Faye Ruiz, L.J. Guillot, Sharon White, Lynne Cuccia, Michele Hubert, Christy Paulsell, Joe Madere, Jim Gordon, Janet Dement, Sue and Jack McGuire, Nans Bousfield, Gary and Anita Cross, Lynne Cuccia, Michele Hubert, Denise Bonck, Steve Madere, Margaret Gonzales, Alma Chazez, Ashley Austin, Leslie Pontila and Jens Lorenz**. Thanks also to "chefs" **Jerry Sweeney and Chuck Cuccia** manning the BBQ pits.



Making a great day even better, the weather was perfect. There was so much to do and see and hear and eat !!!

**"A good time was had by all!"**



# BEACH SWEEP 2003

Saturday, September 20, 2003 was the day scheduled by the Ocean Conservancy for an international effort to clean the world's waterways. Volunteers from across the country staked out areas along the shorelines of our rivers, lakes and bayous. Our Friends group, along with USFWS staff, and a great group of volunteers picked up trash and debris by the crabbing bridge in the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge and along the shoreline of Lake Pontchartrain at the foot of the Hwy. 11 bridge. Volunteers included teacher **Sue Ellen Lyons** and her group of **young men from Holy Cross High School**; **Casey Bass** with his **Boy Scout Troop 60**; members of the **Crescent City Bird Club**; and members of our **Friends of Louisiana Wildlife Refuges (FLWR)**. 7 staff members from USFWS and 60 volunteers collected 5,000 lbs. of trash! Thanks to our many helpers and their hard labor. You could see a huge difference in the area when the work was done.



The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) (better known as the 'Save Our Lake' group) coordinated the event locally for a variety of sites – and a total of 1,808 volunteers! When the work was completed, everyone gathered at a picnic sponsored by the LPBF on the grounds of the old Pontchartrain Beach. It was a very good day.

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## WILD THINGS 2003 YOUTH ART CONTEST



The art contest sponsored by the Friends of Louisiana Wildlife Refuges was part of our Wild Things celebration. The work produced by the young people of our community is astounding. This gave the judges this year a most difficult job. The categories for judging and the results are as follows:

Drawing (Ages 5-8) 1st place: **Brekel Kemp**, Mandeville Middle School

(Ages 9-11) 1st place: **Ryan Wood**, Mandeville Middle School

(Ages 12-14) 1st place: **Brandon Blappert**, Creekside Junior High School

(Ages 15-18) 1st place: **Joey Waguespack**, Archbishop Rummel High School

Painting (Ages 9-11) 1st place: **Spencer Bagert**, Mandeville Middle School

(Ages 12-14) 1st place: **Darren Marcev**, Creekside Junior High School

(Ages 15-18) 1st place: **Jason Kent**, Archbishop Rummel High School

The Best of Show went to **Joey Waguespack**, 18, with a drawing titled "Alligators in Marsh"; art teacher **Cherie Rouquette** of Archbishop Rummel High School.

Each first place winner was presented with a \$50.00 award. Best of Show was awarded \$100.00. Prizes were courtesy of our FLWR group.



Judging the contest this year were **James Harris**, Wildlife Biologist and Artist; **Nancy Walters**, Wildlife Biologist and waterfowl specialist; **Tom Alhquist**, USFWS Volunteer; and **Lynne Cuccia**, Friends of Louisiana Wildlife Refuges (FLWR) Board Member.